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THE CHURCH, OUR MODERN SYSTEM OF COMMERCE, AND THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

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In my paper on the subject of Interest I used the following language—"Viewed as to the magnitude of their results, the two greatest facts in modern times are, *the destruction of the world's money by the issue of paper currency, and the degradation of the world's industry by the lending of that currency on interest.*"

I quote the passage here, because it is my desire to impress upon the mind of the reader that the more thoroughly we understand the economic bearings of these two important facts, the nearer we arrive at a solution of the great problems now agitating the world of industry.

In that paper, as far as my space would allow, I endeavored to shew the grounds on which we must ever regard the precious metals as having been intended by nature to fulfil the functions of what we understand by the term "money." I considered labor as the one essential principle which confers upon them their value, and which guarantees absolute security to industry in all its exchanges. I further endeavored to shew that paper currency is a general suspension of payment, that it is impossible it can ever effect a payment, that it trades on industry and uses the capital of industry without recompense, and that the natural results of such a system of deceit and wickedness is seen in the widespread degradation and poverty of our working millions. The very essence and life of a paper currency, and of the system in general connected with that currency, is to suspend payment, and thus it lives and gathers in from labor without giving anything in return. These, and many other points of the deepest importance, I have elaborated with some fulness in my "New Catechism on Political Economy," a short work which I would crave the reader to peruse as a sort of introduction to the following pages. For it is indeed a necessary and preliminary step to the proper understanding of the prophetic visions to which I am about to refer, that we make ourselves familiar with the *true* principles of political economy. Thus also will we be placed upon our guard against that strange mixture of truth and error which distinguishes the writings of so many of the expounders of the modern or paper school, and be able to comprehend how the ruin and degradation of industry have followed as the natural and inevitable results of the extensive violation of these true principles.

My object in this paper is, in a few brief sentences, to draw the attention of the Church, and especially of the ministers of Christ, to some scripture prophecies which I regard as having their literal and exact fulfilment in our modern system of commerce, banking, and currency. There can be no doubt that the Bible, in many passages, points to a vast system which should arise in the latter days, unparalleled in its destruction and in its disastrous effects on the

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human family, unsurpassed in wickedness, and so universal as to embrace the civilized world. Our modern system of commerce, in its terrible and unceasing oppression of all who toil, answers the requirements of these prophecies to the letter.

The first prophecy to which I refer is contained in the fifth chapter of Zechariah.

The Ephah and Flying Roll.

This short chapter is a study by itself. Every verse is full of meaning. There can be no mistaking the scope of the prophecy. It exhibits the corruption of commerce as typified by the woman sitting in the midst of the Ephah, the well-known measure of the Jews. A *woman* is set forth here, as well as in the kindred visions in the Revelation of Saint John, as *prolific* of all evil, a *mother* of all abominations of the earth. She occupies the Ephah, sits in the midst of it, brings all commerce under her sway, corrupts all exchanges, ruins the industry of the world, and robs the toilers of their just rewards. She takes away the lawful and labor-earned money of industry, and by her shameless substitution of paper, and the universal practice of usury (or interest), trades upon the industry of the world's population, and thus brings forth misery, poverty, and crime, in an ever-flowing and augmenting stream. The short and pointed expression of the Angel, "this is wickedness" (see also 2nd Thess. ii. 8) warns us of a system pre-eminent for its vileness, and as excelling all others in its deceit and sinfulness. Other systems may have some elements of goodness calculated to preserve them from ruin or decay; but this that goeth forth is concentrated wickedness, without one redeeming feature to avert or stay its impending doom. The prophet at first sees the flying roll, and is told that it represents "the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth; for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it, and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it." Faithful old Bible! There is no mincing of words here. Things are called by their right names. This curse is like a two-edged sword. It singles out just the two prominent sins of our modern system—the robbery of the poor toilers, and the false claims it sets up. God's command is, Thou shalt not lend upon usury,—if your covetousness is so great that you will not be restrained, then make the stranger your victim, not your brethren and kindred. This modern Babylon says, It is good to lend upon usury, not only to our brother, but to all and sundry—these commands were for the poor ignorant Jews, not for educated, trading, and intelligent christian people. The Church echoes the sentiment, and thus, sad to think, "swears falsely by His name" (verse 4th). Babylon says, The money which God has provided for the industry of the world is not good—there has been an error about it—it is too heavy—there is not enough of it—it costs much labor to obtain it—take my promises to pay you for the labor you give me,—they are far better; true, I give you no labor or service in return for what you give me, only bits of paper; and I promise to pay you that which is too heavy; or which is too costly to obtain; or useless when it is obtained; or which is deficient in quantity; or which, compared with the amount of my "promises," may have no existence at all; but these promises will circulate from hand to hand and that is enough. Labor asks for bread—there is thus given to it a stone. *The Church approves.* Can we wonder

that the Lord of hosts should threaten to the prophet to send this curse, this flying roll, into our houses, till they are consumed, "with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof."

The casting of the talent of lead upon the mouth of the Ephah reminds us of a similar act of indignation on the part of the angel in the 18th Chapter of Revelation—the casting of the stone like a great millstone into the sea. Both equally represent the closing of Babylon's long and terrible career. The Ephah must no longer be falsified. It is sealed, as it were, with this ponderous weight. The prophet sees two women, the wind in their wings, lifting it up and bearing it swiftly away. He enquires, "whither do these bear the Ephah?" How significant the response, "To build it a house in the land of Shinar; and it shall be established and set there upon her own base." The Ephah must be taken to a land where *wisdom* is known to prevail—it must no longer be left amongst a sottish, prejudiced, and covetous people—the long reign of tyranny and oppression must now close—it is in the land of Shinar, of wisdom, that the Ephah must be established *and set upon her own base*. The industrial interests of the human family are of too stupendous a character longer to allow the Ephah to rest on a base of falsehood and deceit—panics, convulsions, and upheavings, have had no effect in unseating the woman or in bringing men to wise reflection—it will now be removed altogether to a land where wisdom shall build for it "a house," and hew out for it her "seven pillars;" where our Maker shall be no longer reproached by the oppression of the poor; and where the "just weight" shall prevail which is ever the Lord's delight.

Thus would God, by these significant symbols, draw the minds of His children to sober and thoughtful reflection. Shall we be disobedient to the heavenly vision?

Deut. xxiii. 19 "Thou shalt not lend upon usury (or interest) to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury."

Though not a prophetic utterance, I think it well, just at this point, to make a few remarks on these words of Scripture. In my "Thoughts" I have given full consideration to this and kindred passages.

This verse contains the true principles of economic science. People may have been accustomed to read it carelessly, and to set it aside as something effete with which modern society has nothing to do. Society has to do with it, and the Church will ere long be compelled to explore its profound depths. There is matter here for the most penetrating intellect. The man who, in blind confidence with what passes around him, is determined to believe that paper is money, and that to lend that paper on interest is a blessing to humanity, may as well pass it by. It is difficult, indeed impossible, to interpret it, unless we thoroughly understand the *true* elements of political economy. It is the chief corner stone on which the whole structure of industrial progress and happiness, of entire humanity in its economic features, will yet be fitly framed together. It recognises the following elementary truths.

Utilities are all gratuitous—free gifts from God.

Money, as a so-called instrument of exchange, is entirely gratuitous in its work—nobody can pay for that service.

Labor can only pay for labor, service for service,

Labor has never given any thing for utilities, therefore utilities cannot be sold. Industry, consequently, *as a productive agent*, can never pay for the use of property of any kind—a great economic truth which, it will be yet seen, cuts to the root the claims of capital, so called.

In selling any product, it is virtually the labor contained in the product which is sold. All else comes gratuitously.

Labor cannot pay more for any product than the amount of labor embodied in that product. It cannot pay more on the ground of "credit" being given for, say three, six, or twelve months, whether for money, goods, or victuals. If goods, the products of industry, are sold at an enhanced price on account of credit being given, labor must suffer.

Machinery, or in other words the workman's tools or appliances, can never receive any reward separate from the hands which wield that machinery. There can never be two profits, or half a profit, one for labor and one for its tools. The man who ceases *to work*, ceases to come within the range of the laws of political economy. Such is a righteous and equitable law. A system which recognises a reward for the workman, and another for his tools, will soon issue in the machinery, the property, passing out of the hands of the workman into the hands of others. The real producers will then soon degenerate into mere hired hands.

It is the design of God that every man should own the fruits of his own labor, and that mere money should constitute but a small proportion of these fruits, seeing it is only a medium of exchange and useless for any other purpose, and that there is but a small portion for each of the world's population, but yet, by a well known economic law, always quite enough for his use as a producer desirous of exchanging the whole or a part of the fruits of his toil.

The land is to be owned by the men who cultivate it, not rented from another who does not cultivate it. If labor works the land and pays rent at the same time, it must be oppressed.

Money is absolutely unproductive—it produces nothing.

Money, as such, does not pay—it is the labor in the money which really pays.

Money cannot yield what is known under the name of interest.

If interest of money is exacted, labor must suffer.

In every act of exchange, the profit is on the side of the man with the labor, not on the side of the man who only gives a bit of money on which he has bestowed no labor (see this important truth fully set forth in my New Catechism.)

When the money which is paid for anything hired (a house for example) equals in its labor value the amount of similar value actually embodied in the commodity, the thing hired has then been fully paid for; and this on the grounds that money cannot produce, that utilities are gratuitous, and that payment withheld cannot increase the value of products of labor.

A general system of hiring, whether of men's frames or of the products of their labor, is an evil and corrupting system for the human race, contrary to the designs of God, and opposed to the true dignity of man as well as to the principles of economic science.

These are a few of the grand truths embodied in the above words of Scripture—a verse in the midst of the oracles of God neglected and almost forgotten by the Church,

Wisdom.

Revelation xiii. 18—"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred, three score and six."

What fanciful interpretations have been set forth, first and last, regarding this verse. It was for a long time sealed to me, because I sought to find in it that which it does not contain. Like many others before me, I fell wide of the mark and lost the spirit of the verse in seeking to *identify* the beast with some special number or mark.

It refers to no mysterious number, mark or sign. It directs the thoughtful student to something better and far more instructive than mere cabbalism. It would be derogatory of the character of scripture revelation to imagine that some sort of riddle or "guess" had been propounded us, over the meaning of which the veriest dunce might successfully stumble. The interpretation is simply this. Let the man of understanding investigate for himself the work of this evil system—let him thoughtfully consider its doings—let him count up the number of the abominations to which it has given birth—let him carefully reckon the misery, the oppression, the crime, the degradation, the ignorance, the warfare and bloodshed, all the evils combined, which have flowed to the human race from its long and dreadful career, especially as we see them developed in these later times, and in those great cities to the unhealthy growth of which it has so largely contributed. Let a man be conversant with these various forms of evil and the source from which they spring—let him thoroughly master the subject, and he will be deserving of the name of a wise man. For our God declares that *this* is wisdom—to know what the beast has brought forth. Is it a large number? Yes. Is it six? Yes. Is it sixty? Yes. Is it six hundred? Yes,—a great number. And it is "the number of a man." That is, it is not beyond human comprehension—it is within the grasp of our intellects. The diligent student may, in large measure, reckon them up, and arrive at some just apprehension of the bearing and influence upon the race of this mysterious system of iniquity, undoubtedly the last and greatest with which our world is to be afflicted.

O ye ministers of our God, let me appeal to you. It is your wisdom and safety to begin the study. Make yourselves acquainted with those precious economic laws under which a wise and merciful Providence has designed that humanity is to work out its great destiny. Make yourselves familiar, as far as you can, with the manner in which these laws have been violated by modern banking and commerce. Do you wish to know the cause why our churches are so cold and why the Holy Spirit is withheld? study this system. Do you wish to know why the working millions are banished from the sanctuary, and why our overgrown cities are teeming with vice? study this system. Do you wish to know why it is that so little impression is made on the heathen world? study this system. To be ignorant of it is death,—to be wise is life. Do not suffer yourselves to be led astray by the plausible statements of those who strive to uphold it. Most people, you know, consider themselves to be born economists. I beseech you, be upon your guard against that delusion. Determine to learn. *Thought* must be given to the subject, and in solitude and silence it must be learned. You will gain little amidst the hurry and fuss of conventions and assemblies. You are bound, by the highest considerations, to understand the

economic laws bearing upon the industry of your people. To be ignorant here is criminal neglect. Most of what you think you know must be unlearned that you may truly learn. Mighty questions are looming up before us which one way or other will compel your attention. Rest assured you will be wise men as you are able to count the number of the beast. Do not waste time with silly applications of Greek and Hebrew words. It is at your peril that you neglect the question. If you do not master the subject, it will master you in a way that you little anticipate. A groaning and afflicted world stretches forth its hands to you for deliverance. Will patient and defenceless industry for ever appeal to you in vain?

Rev. xiv. 11—"And they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

Never has there been a prophecy more thoroughly and literally fulfilled. Is not the present the age of unrest? Are not men universally disquieted? Day and night the men of commerce are disturbed. Forebodings and fears are the inevitable portion of all who lend and of all who borrow. They come as the natural results of the system. Have the poor toilers rest—those on whom the mighty burden, in its most grievous form, principally falls? Is there rest for the hapless debtor who is conscious of his dishonorable position, and struggles on throughout a joyless lifetime in the vain hope of deliverance? If we "worship" the beast—if we in any way take part in the work, or receive the dreadful mark in the forehead, the seat of intelligence, or in the hand, the seat of labor, we shall surely have what we deserve, restlessness, anxiety, care, worry, disappointments, griefs, and forebodings of evil. Is it strange that it should be so? It is not strange. As we sow we shall reap. Thousands and tens of thousands of broken hearts must echo these true and faithful words of a holy and righteous God. There is hardly a countenance you scan as the crowds hurriedly pass you on the street but seems to whisper to you, "God's words are all true, His threatenings as well as His promises. Ours is a furnace toil. We have no rest."

What God says of Modern Commerce.

Rev. xviii. 2—"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

2nd. Thess. ii. 8—"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Here is a loathsome picture for you. Can any good thing come out of Babylon? No, nothing good. It is wholly given over to evil. Attempt reformation with such a system? Vain thought, Its end is destruction. Commerce in itself is honorable. Exchange is a necessary element in the life and well-being of the human family. Industry is destined yet to play a mighty part in the subjugation of the world to Christ, for it is the *daily sacrifice of labor* which will be mainly employed and most largely blest in this great work. Corrupt these as Babylon has done, and the sea of human life will become "as the blood of a dead man." This modern system has gone to such extremes, and Satan

has so cunningly deceived all nations regarding it, that it has become a hold of every foul spirit, a favorite habitation of devils, a cage of all uncleanness. It is the one great field in the world in which the devil lays his most artful wiles for the destruction of mankind. A mighty enterprise is before him, nothing less than the subjugation of the whole world of industry, and it falls at last in willing homage at his feet. He reasons with consummate wisdom when he forms and gradually unfolds this grand conspiracy against the liberties and happiness of our race. I shall cause (we can imagine him saying) the gold and the silver, the vast resources of the industry of all lands, to be poured at the feet of a harlot—I shall divert these resources from their lawful channels of blessing for the human race, and apply them where they will not fail to corrupt mankind—I shall cause every man to receive a mark which will cloud his intelligence, or rob him of the reward and profit of his toil—the multitudes I will thus clothe with ignorance, poverty, and rags; the few I will adorn with purple and fine linen—Let me not only have, by means of usury, a portion of the labor of the race, but let me have, by means of a fictitious currency, the industry of the whole world placed in my power—I shall thus sit, as God, in the temple of God, shewing myself that I am God—I will use such curious arts that the nations shall be deceived, commerce itself shall be degraded into a vast theatre of gambling, the Church shall be overcome, and even the ministers of religion shall extol and applaud my doings—and, chief of all my enterprise, I will by these means not only corrupt modern civilisation, causing its polluted stream to debauch every shore whither it flows, but arrest the flight of the everlasting Gospel, and keep countless millions shrouded in heathen darkness. Here, on such a field, evil spirits innumerable hold their revel; here the Church has participated in the GREAT CRIME of the ruin of industry, and here the death struggle will take place. This mother of all abominations is destined to give birth to so many successive forms of iniquity that her sins will yet reach unto heaven. Her destruction, therefore, is only a question of time. O Lord, fill us with a holy jealousy lest we be found in such companionship.

The Subjugation of the Church.

Rev. xiii. 7—"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them."

Rev. xvii. 6—"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

Daniel vii. 21—"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." Verse 25—"He shall wear out the saints of the Most High."

Ezekiel xxviii. 18—"Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the iniquity of thy traffic."

There can be no doubt about the fulfilment of these prophecies. For hundreds of years the Church was faithful in her antagonism to the spirit of usury. Her discipline was severe, and she uttered no uncertain sound. Long and persistent "war" was made upon her by the spirit of covetousness and gain. Gradually she gave way. The world at last prevailed. It is now some centuries since she ceased all opposition, and fell in with those practices which she had so strenuously condemned. It is a matter of history. And now the saints are completely overcome. The Church is as thorough a

worshipper of the beast as any follower of mammon. Her religious journals are amongst the foremost in its defence. She lends it, in every way, her countenance and support, and in fact lives from its illgotten gains. Her funds and investments, her stocks, and interests, and mortgages, tell but too surely which side has been vanquished in this great spiritual war. Her colleges of learning emulate the daughter of the horse leech in their constant cry, for they seem never to have enough let their endowments be ever so great. The Protestant branch has followed the beast without any restraint, and has worshipped him with the utmost infatuation. She has no idea that the scourge applied by the Saviour in the temple has any reference to these days or to her acts. Through her erroneous exposition of the Mosaic laws bearing on the subject, she has made the word of God of none effect, and flattered men into the belief that in violating these laws they were doing God service. The woman is "intoxicated" with the very life blood of the Church. Hence we have the warning voice from heaven in

Rev. xviii. 4—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Jer. li. 45—"My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord."

Will we give ear to the appeal? It is a voice from heaven itself. It recognises the fact that God's children are deeply immersed in the system. Here is the only path of safety. Come out and you will be safe. Remain, and you and yours will surely partake of her plagues. Though you are involved and ensnared by this foul system, God still yearns over you and claims you as His children. Therefore give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids, till thou hast delivered thyself as a bird from the hand of the fowler. Listen to God's affectionate entreaty. He sees us in imminent peril, and appeals to us with the earnestness of a loving father. Modern commerce sits upon a volcano. He would have us in a place of safety ere sudden destruction cometh. We must count the cost, and leave the system utterly, whatever that cost may be. *Guilty* contact with the beast must be avoided at all hazards.

The drying up of Euphrates.

Rev. xvi. 12—"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

As the Euphrates was the stream beside which ancient Babylon reared its walls and established its dominion, so here it is used as the expressive emblem of that great stream of commerce on which modern Babylon has reared its mighty kingdom. The whore sitteth "upon many waters." Commerce, now vitiated and corrupted in all its exchanges, is the instrument through which the hard hand of toil is compelled to clothe the whore in purple and scarlet array, and to deck her with gold, and precious stones, and pearls. But it is necessary, in the interests of humanity, that this great river be dried up. It is a corrupt and corrupting stream. If it be allowed to flow on, mankind will at last perish from the earth. "No flesh will be saved." There is an impassable gulf between the true theory of political economy and our modern mercantile system. The sixth angel therefore pours his vial on these waters and they are dried up. That is, as I suppose, false ideas and corrupt practices

will give way before the advance of true, wise, and righteous principles. The way of the kings of the east will be thus prepared. The human race must not be forsaken. It must be indoctrinated with the principles of justice, equity, and truth. In the words of Ezekiel, men of continual employment must be severed for this work, till the last offensive relic of the foul system is buried out of sight, and the land thoroughly cleansed; a good work in which the "passengers," the men of commerce, shall themselves at last delight to aid. The wise and the good are the only real kings among men. They come with the brightness of the eastern sky. The world waits in earnest expectation. Methinks I hear the tread of their stately steps. Hasten your coming, O ye kings of the east.

The Fifth Angel and his vial.

Rev. xv. 10, 11—"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain. And blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

What a description of a widespread commercial panic! The angel pours out his vial upon the seat of the beast; upon the leading monied centres, so called, of this proud Babylon, and forthwith the boastful kingdom is full of darkness. There is no light now to be had. Every man suspects his fellow. This great communistic system is in peril. A mighty one falls and hundreds are involved in his ruin. They grope like the blind for the wall. They run to and fro in an agony of fears. They are at their wits end. They know not at what they stumble. Each one blames the other for the existence of the panic, and like silly children of the market place they attribute it to every cause but the right one. The men of commerce affected to despise the gold and the silver, but there is now a cry for these which shakes the whole land. The boastful tongue of proud Babylon is now gnawed for very pain. Do we now repent of our deeds? Alas! No. We still "blaspheme," speak evil of God's beneficent laws. By and by His avenging hand is removed. Alas! it has all been of no avail. We return to our evil deeds like the dog to his vomit. Babylon the great, the Bible tells us, is endowed with "a mouth speaking great things." Of that there can be no doubt. As she feels her throne become somewhat secure after its fearful rockings and that some "respite" is granted, she is not long in boastfully repeating, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." She that is so appropriately denominated MYSTERY will continue her dreadful work, blinding and deceiving the minds of men, and defying high heaven, till the day of her final and sudden destruction arrives. Then her eager worshippers will no longer doubt, and will be able to boast no more, as they witness the smoke of her burning, but will be glad, if possible, to stand afar off in the extremity of their fear and dismay.

How affecting is the thought that the vast majority, apparently, of the human family, will only be awakened to a sense of the guilt of the system through which the riches of the world have been amassed and gathered out of the toilers' hands, by the sudden and complete destruction of these very riches before their eyes. For Pharaoh and his host there is nothing but the overwhelming waves. What a lesson to those who know that they must shortly stand

before the judgment seat of Christ to give in their account! How scrupulously careful ought we to be in giving value for value, and how careful and rigid ought our examination to prove of that system under which we have been educated, and in which we have been accustomed to believe without question or hesitation.

The blessed dead and their labors.

Rev. xiv. 13—"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Often have I wondered why a verse, whose contents are apparently so foreign to the context, has been introduced just in the midst of these visions of smoke and torment and fire and blood. Does it not appear strange—the blessed cheering words of comfort and hope and rest intertwined with these fiery scrolls? Ah! there is need for it. The days of vengeance are approaching—days of trial for all, and especially for those who are set for the defence of the truth. The Church has a terrible conflict before her when she comes to confront this great system of iniquity. It is well that John was commanded to write these comforting words. They will be needed by those who are found faithful to the cause of truth and righteousness. *From henceforth* great will be the blessedness of those who die in the Lord, abundant will be their rest and reward, because *from henceforth* great will be their trials and labors.

"And their works do follow them." How disheartening and cheerless a thing it is when we receive no fruit in return for our labor. The husbandman knows it well who sees the fruits of the earth devoured by God's great army before his eyes. The poor toiler knows it well who gives his physical strength in arduous work from day to day, and lives and dies in cheerless penury, the wealth which he creates passing continually away into the hands of others. Even hope is quenched within him as he sees his children doomed to the same inevitable fate. But here is a promise from the mouth of God, that, of the works of those "who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," not one shall be fruitless. These works shall all follow them laden with the richest blessings for their fellowmen. Ministers of the sanctuary! Think of your reward if you are found faithful in confronting this modern Babylon, this great enemy of God and man. Get but the victory over the beast, and it will be yours to stand on the sea of glass with the harps of God, and to sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb.

The fate of those who worship the beast.

Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11—"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand: the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

What terrible utterances! They just precede the words of comfort

and blessing we have last considered. The times of this ignorance God hath winked at, but now commandeth men everywhere to repent. Let the worshippers of the beast, the active upholders of this system, read and tremble, for well they may. There is not a more dreadful imprecation in all the Scriptures than in these solemn sentences. They let us know, beyond any doubt, what God thinks of the system. Could human language frame anything more dreadful to be sounded into the ears of pastors, of church-goers, of church office-bearers, of respectable and well-to-do members of society. O let us be careful that we afflict not the poor nor injure labor. Let us not be the active agents in creating poverty and misery, instead of plenty and happiness. Ignorance or indifference will not excuse us. Let us see to it that in all our dealings we strive to give *personal service to the full*, the only way by which we can escape this mark which excites so great displeasure in the mind of God. Let not our precious time be spent in corrupting industry and exchange—in taking away from the poor toilers their hard earned gains *by the manipulation of a few pieces of paper*. Poverty is far to be preferred before wealth drawn out of unrequited labor. The one may cause some discomfort for a few fleeting years, the other is associated, as God assures us, with a torment which ascendeth up for ever and ever. O my Christian brother, it is over you I yearn, and it is you I would endeavor faithfully to warn. Let the loud voice of the third angel not pass unheeded. Depend upon it, these threatenings are not uttered in vain. They require, you, reader, whoever you are, to examine where you stand in relation to our modern system of traffic. God grant that you may hear and obey, and thus escape the awful condemnation set forth in these letters of fire. Take care, I beseech you, that you flatter not yourself with the idea that it refers to some other church than the one to which you belong—that church perhaps in many respects a model to your own—or to something less respectable than the things now so much esteemed among men. “He that by usury (lending on interest) and unjust gain, increaseth his substance”—he who practically aids in destroying the money which God has given for the reward and protection of labor—stands, as I solemnly believe, in a most perilous position.

The black horse and his rider.

Rev. vi. 5, 6—“And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse: and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.”

“And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.”

A commercial vision.

Two things are evidently taught us here. First, God would have his Church remember the spirit of equity with which all commercial transactions should be undertaken. There are relative values established by the sweat of the brow. One article of labor must necessarily bear a certain labor relation to every other product of labor. There is no absolute measure of value. Human labor, in its innumerable exchanges, must constantly measure itself. Your labor, in its exchangeable value, must submit to be measured by all other labor. One measure of wheat is worth a penny, and three measures of barley are worth a penny. Three times more toil are necessary to

produce a measure of wheat than a measure of barley. A penny, three measures of barley, and one measure of wheat, are of relative values. The same labor which produces a penny, produces one measure of wheat, and three of barley. The balances in the hand of the rider present an even beam, and the producers of these commodities receive each a fair reward. It is in reality human labor, in the wasting of its physical strength and energy, which is weighed by the rider on the black horse. And not only would he have us fix our attention on labor as the only source of all value in exchange, but selects the most precious products to illustrate what he has to say—the wheat and barley, the wine and the oil. He would thereby have us reflect that the producers of these staples of life are the most valuable of all workers, and should be always fully rewarded.

The black horse, expositors have remarked, represents national calamities. There may be meaning, therefore, in setting this rider upon a horse of that color.

Second—"See thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Industry may be ruined by an uneven balance. Evidently an injunction to us to be careful—to seek no more in return for our labor than that labor deserves—to give measure for measure, value for value, labor for labor. The oil, the wine, and the money are precious—the goodly fruits of the earth must be cherished. God gives them for our comfort and sustenance, and has made an indissoluble connection between the advancement and elevation of our race and the proper cultivation of the arts of industry *in the protection of work*. Take care that you do no injury to the hand of toil. Defraud it not with bits of paper. Let nothing so utterly mean disgrace your life. Give it service for service. Let the spirit of justice and equity ever prevail. "Come and see." A look at the rider on the black horse will do you good; and there is far more in the vision than I am able to set forth. This mute rider has many a lesson yet both for the Church and the world.

Thus we see that it is very homely things indeed to which these wonderful visions are related; not to Napoleons, and Cæsars, and Charlemagnes, but to the practical duties of the Christian life. To what else could they relate? Has not the strange imagery with which they are presented had much to do in causing us to roam far wide of the mark?

The beast rising out of the sea.

Rev., Chapter xiii.

This solitary Seer is now taken to the sand of the sea; and from the vantage ground of that lonely shore, he looks forth upon the tumultuous ocean before him. Out from its rolling waters a grand and mysterious vision slowly rises—a mighty creature appears, adorned with all the emblems of power and glory. Surely he is the perfection of wisdom, strength, and beauty, with his seven heads and ten glittering crowns. He is the counterpart of the fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, seen by Daniel. Mark what he is like. In his general appearance he resembles the leopard—the very perfection of wiliness and cunning. His feet are as the feet of a bear—he draws towards him everything good on which he can lay his paws. His mouth is as the mouth of a lion—he destroys and devours everything that comes in his way. He receives a deadly

wound, but it is healed. A mouth is given unto him "speaking great things." He overcomes the saints. He obtains dominion over all the earth. The whole world wonders after him. He causeth all who buy and sell to receive his mark. He obtains his seat from the dragon, and wields from the same source world-wide authority and power.

Could a more perfect picture be drawn of modern Babylon, with its splendor and power, rising up in the midst of the sea of human life—with its craft and cunning—its insatiable desires—its destruction of industry—its deadly panics and "confidence restored"—its boastful tongue, the press daily sending forth the unceasing challenge, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"—every product of industry and every effort of toil branded deeply with its mark—the whole civilised world "wondering" after it, and paying it court and homage with a servitude more degrading, all things considered, than that of the heathen who prostrates himself before stocks and stones—and the Church of Christ itself laid in bondage at its feet.

Now, has the reader ever really reflected on the enormous wickedness of what is known by the general name of a paper currency? Nothing which the world has yet seen has exceeded it in that respect, and certainly nothing has approached it as an instrument of oppression to the human family. The Jews, in their violation of the Mosaic statutes, lent something at any rate which had cost labor, a commodity, the produce of toil, gold or silver. They practiced simple usury, oppressive enough in its way to excite the anger and displeasure of God. But we have quite surpassed the deeds of the Jews. What is the lending of bits of paper, the usury of the Christian? How shall we set it forth? It is usury, joined to fraud and deceit of the deepest dye. Nothing is lent to industry. Value is received—no value is given. On the contrary, under the pretence of lending to industry, and disguised under the boasted name of "credit," the fruits of labor are taken without recompense; and through this system of promises (for these promises pass as money in payment—that is, *they transfer goods*) the poor toilers are actually compelled to lend, continuously, their hard-earned gains to the paper issuers, and to pay at the same time, under the name of "discount," for the loan of their own means. Could any Christian man, for example, call in his neighbours to do a piece of work, to erect a barn or build him a house, and then defraud them by giving his written promises to pay these tradesmen, and not only thus withhold payment, but actually discount these bits of paper at the moment he hands them over, well knowing that through the reputation he has by such means gained as a man of wealth and credit, these paper promises would not fail to float continuously from hand to hand among the people around him? *Would he not be constantly enjoying the use of the capital of these poor workmen? and would he not be actually causing them to pay, under the name of discount, for that which is their own?* Would it lessen his guilt one whit were he to deceive them with some idle talk about the "specie basis," or that he kept a few gold pieces (these very gold pieces the produce of toil and the property of labor) for an occasional call? Could any terms of condemnation too severe be used towards the man who would do such a thing? Is not this just the character of paper currency, of every kind, and by whomsoever issued? Do you not know that your boasted credit system is the getting the fruits of

toil into your hands without recompense?—certainly the meanest sort of work the world has yet seen. And has not this system of wrong and oppression overspread the whole world? Has not every Kingdom on earth “committed fornication” with it? Through its instrumentality, the labor of the earth is devoured, and society has been broken in pieces (Jeremiah li., 20-23), so that instead of universal love, friendship, and goodwill, we have a community, in its various grades and castes, bent on devouring and appropriating the fruits of toil wherever found; and in seasons of severe commercial panics society presents perhaps as mournful a sight as can be witnessed in a Christian land. Can humanity flourish, can the heathen be brought to knowledge and virtue, with such a system corrupting Christianity to its core? What hope is there for the world so long as it remains? No wonder that God has sent us “strong delusion that we should believe a lie,” and that this terrible system of oppression and robbery has exalted itself “above all that is called God or that is worshipped.” I tell you, reader, the hollow mask which under the fine names of “specie basis,” “redeemable currency,” and so forth, conceals the hideous features of this paper system, must be torn from before the people’s eyes that its true character may be seen and abhorred by all. The bitter wail of oppressed and suffering industry is heard in every street—from every harvest field a cry of affliction enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; and surely, surely, these are not the times for the ministers and Christian Journals of our land to be silent, or, what is worse, to be endeavouring, with all their might, to daub the wall with untempered mortar.

We have here the key to the second vision in this Chapter. The beast rising out of the earth with two horns like a lamb as seen by John; and the little horn coming up among the others as seen by Daniel; represent, in its later and gradual growth, this most prominent and destructive feature of modern Babylon. The dream is one. It is since the rise and spread of paper currency that the saints have been “worn out,” the Church brought into complete bondage, and the chains thoroughly riveted on the hands of the world’s industry. Has anything in the wide earth spoken greater or more boastful things than this paper system? There is a most significant statement in the Book of Daniel regarding it—*it thought to change times and laws*. The 17th verse in the 13th Chapter of Revelation establishes the matter beyond all doubt. What other system has ever wielded such power as there described? Literally no man can now buy or sell without the mark in a certain sense, for every act of exchange must necessarily be tainted and corrupted by paper currency, seeing that, by means of its close ally the credit system, it has obtained universal dominion over *prices*. The mark reigns supreme in every exchange and in every market throughout the world. This currency, this perfect “image” of the beast which is now in everybody’s hand, was the one thing needed to complete the degradation and ruin of industry; and thoughtful men may now study its mission and its work. In its craft on the one hand, and in the terrible bondage it has brought to enslaved millions on the other, it is unquestionably Satan’s masterpiece.

“Behold the tears of such as are oppressed, and they have no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there is power; but they have no comforter.”

The Loosening of the Angels.

Rev. ix. 13, 14, 15—"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men."

Well may all faces gather blackness in presence of this vision, for it tells of "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness," one of the great and terrible days of the Lord.

These angels are avenging angels.

They are at present chained or held in check by some mysterious power.

Their mission is a very destructive one.

They are fully armed with terrible instruments of destruction.

They are a countless host—"two hundred thousand thousand."

Their work will be short, sharp, and decisive.

They are bound in the great river Euphrates—in modern Babylon itself.

They are being "prepared," schooled, for their avenging work.

I think there can be no doubt whatever that this vision refers to that countless host which our modern system of commerce is so diligently schooling, even to the degraded millions of our fellow creatures whose lives of hard servitude and brutalising toil have brought them to about a level with the beasts that perish, a process of degradation which every person of the least reflection may perceive is going forward at a vastly increased rate every succeeding year. The labor question is not the question of the day only—it is the question of all the ages. I listen to ominous sounds in the distance, indications of the mustering of forces destined to burst over society with tremendous violence. The very "horns" which adorn the beast and give to it their strength and power, will at last hate the whore, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. Who can doubt that in the degradation to which countless millions are being brought, the system is itself preparing the dreadful instruments for its own destruction. Revelation presents them to us as a mighty host clad in gleaming armor and armed to the teeth. It is an appalling thought. Human power and ingenuity will be of no avail in presence of these wild forces when once the restraining hand is removed. Those who lead into captivity shall go into captivity—those who kill with the sword must be killed with the sword. It is in Euphrates itself that these ministers of vengeance must be reared and trained. We have had of late years unmistakable indications that these angels are struggling to be free. The Paris Commune, in at least some of its issues, is a warning of what is approaching on a world-wide scale. There is coming a time of trouble such as no nation has ever seen. The "days of vengeance" must come. It is inevitable. We cannot escape it. It will be emphatically "the Lord's release." Men will yet have to choose their side. These great questions must ere long cut society clean in twain, and bring the soul of every earnest man to the test. The closing portions of the book of Revelation recognise but two classes, those with the mark of God, and those with the mark of the beast. The flippant may scoff, and the wicked do wickedly, but the wise and the true hearted shall understand. My own soul melts within me at the

thought of the sufferings through which the helpless portion of humanity has yet to pass on account of this system of cruelty and wrong. I tremble whilst I write the sentence, but nothing short of some mighty convulsion can deliver industry from its bondage and purge the world of its oppressions and sorrows. This is the Armageddon towards which all the lines of history converge, which is the climax of so much prophecy, for which the attentive ear can catch the hurry of vast preparation in every direction, and from which the race will take its new departure.

In this connection, the solemn and impressive address of our Saviour contained in the 13th Chapter of Mark assumes a new and profound interest. There can be no doubt that He forewarns the Church against calamities far wider in their range and far more disastrous in their results than the destruction of the ancient city of Jerusalem. Many cities have been overwhelmed since Jerusalem fell. From what is said in the 17th verse we may gather how the loving heart of the Saviour was affected as he looked into the distant future, and contemplated the awful scene towards which the stream of humanity is blindly hurrying. The strangely impressive language in which the march of events is set forth finds its counterpart in these visions of John and Daniel. Who can doubt that the rigor and hard bondage with which humanity has been so long made to serve must at last be broken. The generation of men shall not pass away till all these things be done. He lays special emphasis on the fact that they *must* be done. And let me ask, as pertinent to the matter in hand, if the heathen world is not just as much an object of divine care and government as the civilized world? To whom much is given, of them shall much be required. Has not our modern civilization been tried and found wanting? What means the vast majority of men still toiling on in hopeless despair, and sinking lower and lower in the social scale? What means multitudes even in their tender years sacrificed to this Moloch? What means the radical and persistent divorce between Capital, so called, and the Labor which creates it and imparts to it all its value? What means the world's producers in poverty, its non-producers in

* "The following facts illustrate the deplorable condition of brickyard workers in Leicestershire and Derbyshire in 1869. Some of the boys employed are about eight years old, and each one is engaged carrying from 40 lbs. to 45 lbs. weight of clay on his head, to the maker, for thirteen hours per day, traversing a distance of fourteen miles. The girls employed are between nine and ten years of age. They are not engaged carrying clay on their heads the whole of the day, but are partly occupied in taking bricks to the kiln. Some of the children are in a semi-nude state. Many of them in Derbyshire work what is called 'eight hours shifts,' which, reckoning from twelve o'clock on Sunday night to twelve o'clock on Saturday night following, make a weekly labour of seventy-two hours. To ascertain really what work these children have to do, we must suppose a brickmaker (not over quick in his operations) making 3,500 bricks per day. The distance the boy or girl has to travel with mould, which weighs 4½ lbs., and bricks in it 10½ lb., one way, and back to the brickmaker with mould only, is upon the average twelve yards. This multiplied by 3,500 makes the distance nearly twenty-four miles that each child has to walk, every day, carrying this weight with it.

"To see the girls engaged in such work, and at such unseasonable hours, mixed up with boys of the roughest class, must convey to the mind some idea of the sort of wives, with such training, they will make, and the kind of influence they will eventually bring to bear on society."—Mr. George Smith of Coalville near Leicester in *British Workman*.

wealth? What if it should be the Divine purpose that those nations which have had such splendid opportunities and yet have so miserably failed in advancing the cause of humanity, are to yield up the sceptre to those now poor and despised, but which will bring forth the fruits of the kingdom of God. Never has the world been filled with such significant warnings as now. Shall we fail to learn the parable of the fig tree putting forth its tender leaves?

Rev. ix., 1st to 12th verses.

A careful consideration of the contents of the book of Revelation leads me to believe that in the latter days the civilized world will be marshalled in two grand divisions, in complete antagonism to each other, the one distinguished, in Scripture phrase, by the mark of the beast, the other by the seal of God in the forehead. These verses of the ninth chapter evidently point to a work preparatory to that which follows the sixth trumpet, and all immediately antecedent to the final destruction set forth in the 18th chapter. I gather from these verses that the system is destined to receive some terrible scourgings beyond anything which has yet been witnessed; not times of ordinary "panic," but of commercial and industrial sufferings so great and persistent that men, as we are told, shall seek death and shall not find it, and shall desire to die and death shall flee from them. Babylon is capable of bringing forth a state of society beyond anything of which we have yet dreamed. With all moral restraints gone, and the ordinary relationships of life and society set at naught; with the earth trodden down and broken in pieces under the heel of this mysterious power; and filled, in addition, with that violence and crime which is ever the fruit of industrial oppression, and especially of that form of it which is the feature of our times; with the dark and terrible catalogue of crime and wickedness fully realised which is to distinguish the last days and perilous times spoken of by the Apostle Paul; the language seems not inappropriate which sets forth a condition of public anarchy and suffering so great, that many of the children of men will earnestly long for the approach of the last enemy, and the rider on the pale horse will for once seem to forget his commission, and turn his back upon those who would gladly fall beneath his stroke.

The Fourth Kingdom of Daniel.

Dan. vii. 7—"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns."

Dan. vii. 23—"Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces."

Could any language, or any vision, more appropriately set forth the destructive work of modern Babylon, a kingdom unique in itself or diverse from all others, and whose mission is to devour the whole earth, tread it down, and break it in pieces. This is the fourth kingdom as seen by Daniel. It presents to the full every characteristic of this vision. No other kingdom that the world has ever

seen has so fulfilled all these conditions. The language could not be applied to any other kingdom. It can be applied with all truth to this. There cannot be room even for a doubt on the subject. This kingdom has claimed and exercised a cruel and despotic jurisdiction over the industry and traffic of the whole world. The other kingdoms are prolonged for a season—this is completely destroyed and given to the burning flame. The work of the horn (to which I have already referred) before which three of the others fell, which also was unique or diverse from the others, which spoke great words against the Most High, which wore out the saints, *and which even thought to change times and laws*, is the work which fills up the measure of the iniquity of this kingdom, and at last brings upon it the swift destruction witnessed by Daniel in the august and magnificent judgment scene made to pass before his view.

How intensely interesting is the thought that the world is approaching the period represented in this solemn vision; that the afflictions and sorrows of countless millions will be all fully required at no distant date, and that the judgment to be executed upon this world-wide and heartless system of oppression is immediately to precede the full establishment of the kingdom of "one like the Son of Man," whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, never to pass away or be destroyed.

I regard the latter half of the eleventh chapter of Daniel as a revelation, more in detail, of the growth and work of modern Babylon. Let the reader carefully ponder it. Has not the sanctuary been polluted, and the abomination that maketh desolate placed therein? "The abomination that maketh desolate" is a phrase exceedingly expressive of the far reaching and desolating effects of an evil work that stretches its dominion over all the earth, which has effectually arrested the *daily* sacrifice that industry would otherwise place upon the altar of God, and before which human labor in all its efforts and resources is constantly blasted and withered. Also compare Dan. xii. 1 with Mark xiii. 14, 19, 20.

In truth, do we not arrive at a grand conception of what human labor really is, of its dignity and destiny, when we reflect that it is the daily sacrifice of toil which is destined, in the providence of God, to carry the Gospel and civilization to the ends of the earth. There must be sacrifice and service. And thus will men bless and benefit their fellows. But modern Babylon has thoroughly arrested this mighty stream of christian industrial beneficence. The daily sacrifice has been taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate erected in its stead.

The destruction of Modern Babylon.

Rev. chapter xviii.

I put my shoes from off my feet as I approach this solemn scene. I stand in awe in presence of this most vivid and incomparable description of the fall of by far the mightiest monarchy which has ever trampled down the rights and liberties of mankind, a monarchy by the great modern Euphrates of which ruthless and despotic Babylon of old was but a faint emblem. It is impossible to mistake the meaning of this prophecy. Every separate verse rings forth the doom of that system under which industry has so long groaned, and which has received so many shakings and warnings from the hands

of an offended God. Proud Babylon will ere long be smitten to the dust. Any words of mine would but detract from the grandeur of the scene. Let us therefore silently adore as we contemplate this majestic vision passing in review before our gaze.

I have thus referred to the more prominent of some of the visions bearing upon this stupendous system of evil. The Scriptures teem with minor references to the subject. As in the case of the dream of Pharoah the vision was repeated, so these visions are repeated, but with greater frequency, even as the impending judgments are to be on a scale of far greater magnitude. God would thus have us give good heed. In these ancient prophecies there are indeed solemn words and warnings to the pastors and shepherds of the present day.—Ezekiel xxxiv.

It cannot but excite the deepest emotion in every christian mind to consider that in all probability we are drawing near the period represented by the sixth and seventh trumpets and the sixth and seventh vials. I have already said that I believe the system to which I have referred these prophetic visions is capable of bringing forth evils of even greater magnitude than those with which it has already afflicted our race. May we not therefore conclude that it is in the light of what has yet to be revealed that certain other visions, at present obscure, must be interpreted in the future.

I will now conclude with a few general reflections.

I have urged the importance of the proper study of political economy. It may be said with truth that all the great interests of humanity are embraced, more or less, in this science. Around all that is represented by Labor, Value, Money and Exchange, it ever throws the protection of its benign and salutary laws. It stands as a vigilant sentinel at the threshold of every man's home, and guards with jealous care the rewards of his daily toil. It regards every human being as a laborer, and deals to him the fruits and the fruits only of his toil. It settles all claims and distributes all its rewards on the single foundation of labor, and of value as springing from that labor. Rightly interpreted it becomes the basis of national strength and affords a secure guarantee for human elevation and progress. It is not opposed to the divine principles of charity and love, of neighborliness and goodwill, but rather courts their presence and seeks that they may be incorporated with it.* And so, every man born into the world stands in immediate relation to this science, and is placed under the necessity of comprehending its laws if he would become a good member of society and guard at once his own rights and the rights of others. Of many things we may remain in ignorance and be not much the worse. But we dare not remain in ignorance of the laws of political economy. They have a scourge in their hands which sooner or later will be applied to the community which persistently turns a deaf ear to the "instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment and equity." The great problem of Human Society itself can only be unravelled as we comprehend

* See an original and suggestive paper, by the Hon. T. Wharton Collens of New Orleans, read before the Academy of Sciences of that city, entitled "Charity as a scientific principle in political economy." Mr. Collens has given much attention to the labor question, and I would earnestly recommend this thoughtful treatise from his pen.

these laws. We may depend upon it that as there is, between two parties, a mutual profit and advantage in a free exchange of value for value, so there must be a mutual loss, when, either through ignorance or design, this law is violated, the one in the product of his labor, the other in that for which no product of labor can ever compensate. I have the clearest conviction that every man, in receiving labor or the fruits of labor from his fellows, is bound, as a matter of conscience, to restore an equivalent in personal service or the fruits of labor, and this at once in order to preserve that equity which is the life of all exchange, and to secure that blessing without which all industrial efforts must prove eventually in vain. We labor in order to obtain certain true satisfactions, and these satisfactions will never come when equity is violated. The man who proposes to live from the produce of his own labor, or who, in this corrupt and tangled state, does his best to do so, need never be afraid to face the laws of political economy. Though their logic is severe, they will give to him all he can possibly demand. Those who propose to live from the produce of the toil of others had better have as little as possible to do with these laws.

There can be no doubt that people have generally now lost the conception of *labor* as the true source of wealth, and that their ideas on the subject have been transferred to *money* as the source of production and profit. It seems hardly conceivable that an error so transparent could ever have become seated in the public mind. But I do not err in stating that multitudes of educated persons, as well as numerous teachers of political economy, have been carried away with these popular delusions. How widely spread is the notion, for example, that money produces interest. Indeed, the modern money system could never have been exalted to its present position had such ideas not prevailed. Truth has been pushed into the background; and the all but universal error as to money being the source of wealth seems to have floated to the surface and kept its place amidst the wreck of loose material out of which the modern system is constructed. It has been my endeavour to bring labor to the front and to give to it the true place among the economies. One of America's keenest thinkers has struck the key note of my writings when he states, in a full review with which he has honored me, that I "bring everything in political economy to the best of its relation to labor." 'Tis there all our reasoning must begin.

But have we not to consider a deeper delusion, and a more destructive error, connected with this matter? Is it not the case that multitudes of intelligent persons have come to transfer their ideas regarding money from the money itself to the pieces of paper on which somebody has inscribed a promise to pay money or to pay his debt? Is it not true that there is a general determination to regard these fragments of paper as *real money*? How otherwise can we explain, not alone their general use, but their frequent propagation as legal tenders in exchange? Into what a perfect chaos has the mind descended—in what a "strong delusion" does it rest—which can perceive no difference between *money* and a bit of paper on which some one has inscribed the fact that he owes a certain sum for labor made over to him, or for value received, and is moreover not ashamed to let the world know that he intends to profit by that fact—the very evidence of an unpaid obligation, debt itself, exalted to the position of gold and silver! And yet this is not to be much wondered at. A paper school of political economy has long sought to rule and

regulate the fair domain, and has but too successfully sown it broadcast with corrupt seed. Paper, interest, and credit, the three myths of modern traffic, are its chief pillars. It is not surprising that in endeavouring to rear the rickety superstructure, the paper expounders have often found themselves doomed to wander "in endless mazes lost." Over some of the deeper questions of political economy, men may well pause and ponder, and mayhap go astray. But it is painful beyond measure to observe that economists without number have as much faith in these three myths as the child has in his fairy tale. The public mind may be said to have completely given way under the strain of wearisome and endless propositions, not one of which, when put to the test, is able for a moment to withstand the cold touch of reason, and to have settled down into the conviction that what seems so difficult to explain, and so confusing to the economists themselves, it is hopeless ever to expect to understand.

It may be proper to remind the reader that I never treat of accumulated wealth in so far as that wealth is spent by its owner merely for purposes of personal gratification. I have taken it into consideration only as it affects the resources of industry, or violates in its use the laws of political economy. There is here a dividing line, absolute and easily determined; and the enquirer who fails to perceive this line will not only certainly go astray, but may imagine that he has found satisfactory justification for a system whose work is only evil continually.

It is worthy of special note that the subjects discussed are of the deepest importance to the Church and to the cause of missions, inasmuch as they have a direct bearing on the progress of truth and righteousness throughout the earth. It is in this connection that the subject takes us into a field of intense interest and of almost boundless investigation. The Church is in full accord with the modern mercantile system, and so far is in full alliance with by far the most terrible 'system' of oppression which the world has ever seen. Sooner or later the Church will have to face the labor question. That question will, in more ways than one, prove the most difficult problem with which it has ever had to deal. By active participation in this long and constant oppression of labor, it has aided in keeping the masses in a helpless state of poverty, and has thus prevented the resources of industry being so developed as to bear upon the elevation and progress of mankind. * The guilt of the

* See an admirable Tract by Ira Steward, entitled "Poverty," issued by the Boston Eight Hour League. This paper will well repay perusal. It is one of the best things I have seen on the labor question. I have only room for the following extracts: "The Law of supply and demand is said to regulate the price of commodities; but the 'demand' is limited by the great fact of the poverty of the mass of consumers. There never was a market so overstocked with goods that it would have taken a day to empty it, if all the people had been able to pay for all they ought to have. 'A glut in the market' has never yet meant anything more than that millions of people are too poor to pay for the food, clothes, houses, books, and opportunities that are waiting for customers. Poverty obstructs the demand. In the last analysis, it is largely a question of poverty." Mr. Steward's little pamphlet is full of noble reflections. Witness the following: "But the service performed by a menial, in livery perhaps, disappears with poverty. Neither master nor servant have any place in the political economy that plans the annihilation of poverty. Men will be better served without servants; a better living will be earned without masters, when the knowledge that disposes of poverty has also harnessed into the service of man the great and obedient forces of nature. These are the services that can be rendered and

Church in this respect has been very great. It has been an active partner in the darkest conspiracy ever formed by powers of evil against the liberties and happiness of our race. Civilization in a true sense, and the reclamation of the heathen world, can never be accomplished under a state of things in which the multitudes struggle with constant poverty, and the few are exalted to wealth and power. Money, to be effectually used as an instrument in the conversion of the heathen, *must be first consecrated by the hand of toil*. I understand the force of my words when I say that it is impossible so great and good a work can be successfully accomplished by our modern society as now constituted. It is no wonder that the masses have drifted into a state of semi infidelity, and have learned to regard the pulpit either with suspicion or indifference. But these questions will ere long press upon the Church with an urgency which it will not be able to resist, the scales will at last drop from its eyes, and it will awake to a sense of its sin and its shame. It will have to go down and take sides with those who are now the lowest of the population, with those who, by their daily toil, produce for us all the necessities, comforts, and elegancies of life. The ministers of religion may thus see what sort of work they have before them. In this modern mercantile system they have to confront an enemy more powerful, unrelenting, and determined than heathenism itself—a field of conflict on which thorough moral heroism is destined yet to win some of its brightest laurels. Let us not flatter ourselves with the delusion that the days of persecution have passed away never to return. The issue will ever be the same when Christianity comes in conflict with a vast system of error and evil.

It has been anything but a pleasant task for me to throw myself in conflict with the cherished maxims and opinions of my fellow men. I trust I can say that nothing but a supreme regard for truth on the one hand, and of compassion for toiling and suffering multitudes on the other, could have induced me voluntarily to occupy a position the pain of which can be known only to those who have passed through a similar experience. And yet, with all this, I bless God that the investigation of these truths has for many years been to me a source of the purest happiness and satisfaction. I suppose subsequent investigators in the same field will find the bitter and the sweet strangely commingled. I would say to all such that the great truths they are in search of will not be found on the world's beaten highway. They must in solitude and silence, and with the patience of the watcher who scans the midnight heavens, and with something of the same range of vision, think out for themselves those stupendous problems in which are bound up the destinies of our race. And instead of the subject becoming, what so many conceive it to be, one of dry and uninteresting details, they will find themselves not only expatiating in one of the most interesting fields of thought, but will have a key put into their hands with which to unlock some of the deepest mysteries of divine revelation. For myself, I would crave the reader to be indulgent towards all defects in matter or style, and to remember

accepted, without compromising the dignity and manhood of a single human being."

"The Laws of the original Church were avowedly so planned by Moses, both as to the prevention and relief of poverty, that, if obeyed, there could not have been any permanently poor class."—E. H. Rogers in Appeal of the Christian Labor Union of Boston.

that in this vast and untrodden field, I have not had the advantage of any previous literature as an aid or guide. It has been necessary also, in the interests of truth, to say some pretty hard things regarding our modern commercial system. Now once for all, let it be understood that I blame not men, but the system. It would be silly prejudice on my part to ignore the fact that multitudes of our best citizens—honorable, high-minded, true-hearted men, and leaders in many a good enterprise—are involved in it, all unconscious of those great afflictions which it brings in its train. And yet who can deny that the subject comes with terrible questionings to the soul of every man who is determined to be guided in all his dealings by the strict principles of justice and equity.

In saying this much, however, we must not be blind to the fact that there are multitudes who deliberately shut their eyes, and will ever keep them shut, against the entrance of the light. What passes daily before them is in their estimation the sum and substance of all knowledge. The great world of thought beyond is to them a phantom region into which they have no wish to penetrate. Like Demetrius, the silver-smith of Ephesus, it is sufficient for them to know that by this craft they have their wealth. Doubtless that sort of reasoning will carry people as far nowadays as in the time of Demetrius. And so they grope on, as their fathers did before them, in the midst of a darkness which has become to them a sort of second nature, content to believe that humanity revolves in its appointed orbit, and that to look out of the circle in which they move and have their being would be impiety itself and worse than useless. No wonder, then, that divine revelation declares to us, in one of the most affecting scenes of its closing testimony, that the great majority of men will, in the midst of a fancied security and shrouded by that darkness in which a blind and eager devotion to wealth never fails to wrap the soul, be overtaken by that dreadful day which, though it is destined to witness the fruits of industry involved in a common ruin, will at the same time for ever break the power of the oppressor.

It has been my privilege, within these few years, to peruse various printed documents and periodicals from the hands of working men, most of them full of vigorous and original thinking, and unstained by anything calculated to offend the most fastidious taste. I rejoice in these evidences that a time is coming when educated working men will take hold of the literature of the day, and redeem the press from that degrading servitude to mammon, to fiction, and to trifles, which has been so long and so largely its characteristic. The modern mercantile system has had a most faithful ally in the modern newspaper sheet; and if the progress of knowledge depended on what, with a few rare and noble exceptions, is served up to us in our periodical literature with reference to money, banking, finance, and kindred subjects, then the case of the working man would be a hopeless one indeed, and he would be considered for all time to come the fair and legitimate prey of the various "interests" which now fatten from his unrequited labors. Let my fellow workers remember, in the midst of their mental toil, that we have the high honor of helping to lay the foundation of an empire of industry broad and lasting as humanity itself, and whose very corner stones are Righteousness and Truth, and that it would therefore ill become us to lose patience in so great a work. Sufficient for us if we are privileged to lay a few goodly stones destined eventually to carry so

fair a superstructure. The great Teacher himself sets forth the order of progression—*first* the blade, *then* the ear, *after that* the full corn in the ear. And if any earnest reader should desire to cast in his lot with us, we would tell him that the blessing of him who is ready to perish will come upon him, a distinction with which all the baubles of earth are not worthy of being once compared.

Men of heroic and consecrated hearts! I call you to this work. The cry of suffering humanity is the voice of God. Enter, I beseech you, on these whitening fields, that you may receive wages and gather fruit unto life eternal.

And now, in leaving these high and august themes, I would desire with mingled feelings of humility and gratitude to lay these and preceding pages at the feet of my divine Master and Lord, praying Him to forgive all errors and shortcomings which mar my work, to bless whatever may be in accordance with truth, and to hasten the day when His threatenings against great Babylon shall be all fulfilled.

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NOTE.—It is due to those readers who have taken the trouble to read the "Thoughts" to state, that up to the time of the publication of that work, the author had devoted his attention almost exclusively to the two great branches of the subject included under the terms Interest and Money. Into capital, as such, or so-called, he had made little investigation. When it crossed his path he simply adopted and expressed the popular ideas. To complete the harmony of the subject, he found it necessary to institute a critical examination of the claims set up in behalf of capital. The reader will therefore please to regard his sentiments on this branch so far as they are set forth in the later productions noted above.